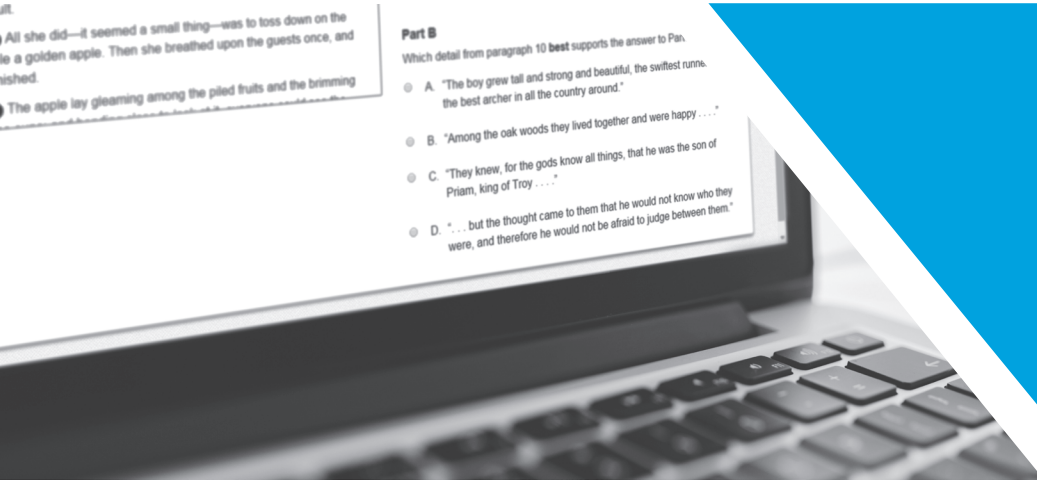


# Spring



**ILLINOIS**  
STATE BOARD OF  
**EDUCATION**



# Illinois Science Assessment Score Report Interpretation Guide



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## **1.0 General Information for Parents and Educators**

### **1.1 Background**

The Illinois Science Assessment (ISA) is administered to meet requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA requires that states test students in science once in each of the following grade spans: 3-5, 6-9 and 10-12. Illinois administers the ISA in Grades 5 and 8. Illinois transitioned in 2025 to the ACT® as the high school accountability assessment for English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science.

### **1.2 ISA Assessment**

The Illinois Science Assessment (ISA) will be administered in either computer-based testing (CBT) or paper-based testing (PBT) format.

The Illinois Science Assessment assesses progress of students in grades 5 and 8 in meeting the Illinois Learning Standards in Science incorporating the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

### **1.3 Confidentiality of Reporting Results**

Individual student performance results on the ISA are confidential and may be released only in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 U.S.C. Section 1232g). Aggregated student performance data are made available to the public and do not contain the names of individual students or teachers.

### **1.4 Purpose of this Guide**

This guide provides information on the individual student reports provided for ISA results. Section 2.0, which outlines and explains elements of the individual student report, may be shared with parents. This section will help parents understand their child's test results.

Sample reports included in this guide are for illustration purposes only. They are provided to show the basic layout of the report and the information it provides. Sample reports do not include actual data from any test administration.

## 2.0 Understanding the Illinois Science Assessment Individual Student Report (ISR)

### 2.1 Types of Scores on the ISA Individual Student Report

Student performance on the ISA is described on the individual student report using scale scores and performance levels. State average results are included in relevant sections of the report to help parents understand how their child's performance compares to that of other students.

#### 2.1.1 Scale Score

A scale score is a numerical value that summarizes student performance. Not all students respond to the same set of test items, so each student's raw score (actual points earned on test items) is adjusted for the slight differences in difficulty among the various forms and administrations of the test. The resulting scale score allows for an accurate comparison across test forms and administration years within a grade or course and content area. ISA reports provide overall scale scores for science, which determine a student's performance level. ISA scale scores range from 700 to 900 for all tests. Additionally, ISA offers domain level scale scores for each of the three domains: Life, Physical, and Earth/Space with a range for domain scale score of 300 to 500.

For example, a student who earns an overall scale score of 800 on one form of the grade 8 science assessment would be expected to earn an overall scale score of 800 on any other form of the grade 8 science assessment. Furthermore, the student's overall scale score and level of mastery of concepts and skills would be comparable to a student who took the same assessment the previous year or following year.

#### 2.1.2 Performance Level

Each performance level is a broad, categorical level defined by a student's overall scale score and is used to report overall student performance by describing how well students met the expectations for their grade level/course. Each performance level is defined by a range of overall scale scores for the assessment. There are four performance levels for the Illinois Science Assessment:

- Level 4: Above Proficient
- Level 3: Proficient
- Level 2: Approaching Proficient
- Level 1: Below Proficient

Students performing at levels 3 and 4 are proficient or above proficient and have demonstrated readiness for the next grade level. Additional information pertaining to the test performance levels can be found in Appendix A.

**2.2 Sample ISR**



**FIRSTNAME M. LASTNAME**


Date of Birth: 10/09/2011 ID: EL03040003 **Grade: 5**  
SAMPLE DISTRICT NAME  
SAMPLE SCHOOL ONE NAME  
ILLINOIS  
SPRING 2025

**GRADE 5 SCI**

**Science Assessment Report, 2024-2025**

The Illinois Science Assessment (ISA) is administered to meet requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA requires that states test students in science once in each of the following grade spans: 3-5 and 6-9. Illinois administers the ISA in Grades 5 and 8. The assessment is approximately two hours in duration. The results provide a high-level indicator of science performance and must be used in combination with other local data points to determine a student's overall proficiency in science. ISA results are intended to serve as a large-scale snapshot of science to shape instruction at the school and district levels.

To view a personalized video about FIRSTNAME's results and to learn more about the assessment, use the QR code shown to the right, or visit <https://familyportal.pearson.com/il>.

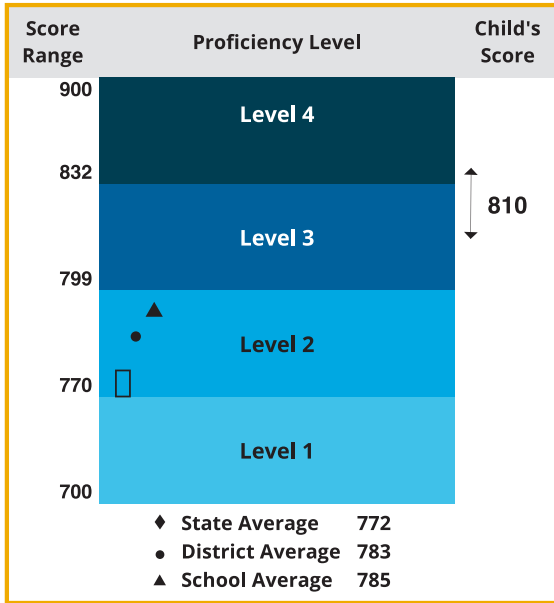


**How Can I Use This Report?**

The State Board of Education has divided ISA scores into four proficiency levels to describe current learning.

**Ask your teachers:**

- Can you provide examples of the skills and critical thinking abilities that are characteristic of different proficiency levels in 5th grade science? (for more information, visit <https://il.mypearsonsupport.com/reporting>)
- What does this report say about your child's current strengths and challenges?
- What they will be doing this year and what can be done at home to help your child make progress?



**Your Child's Score**

<<FIRSTNAME>> achieved a 5th grade score of **810** on the 2025 ISA. This score estimates current levels of academic skill and knowledge and current ability to apply that learning to new academic tasks. Higher scores normally reflect a stronger range of science knowledge and greater ability to apply that knowledge to more complex academic tasks and problems.

It is important to remember that your child's ISA score is an *estimate* of their current learning. Your child's score might be as much as **6.3** points higher or lower. This is the amount of change that would be expected in your child's score if he/she were to take the test many times. Small differences in scores should not be overinterpreted.

It is important to remember that past performance does not determine future academic growth and success. High quality education and student effort and engagement help shape future performance.

Additional information on each Proficiency Level can be found at <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Proficiency-Levels-2025.pdf>

## A CLOSER LOOK AT THREE AREAS OF SCIENCE READINESS

The table below shows student domain scale score, state scale score mean, and student percentile rank for the three science domains. The overall scale score or the performance level above should not be compared to the three domain scale scores below as the scores are not on the same scale.

Domain*	Student Domain Scale Score	State Scale Score Mean	Student Percentile Rank**	Domain Description
<b>Life</b> (300-500)	999	999	999	Students will develop an understanding of molecules to organisms, ecosystems, heredity, and biological evolution.
<b>Earth/Space</b> (300-500)	999	999	999	Students will develop an understanding of Earth's place in the universe, Earth's systems, and Earth and human activity.
<b>Physical</b> (300-500)	999	999	999	Students will develop an understanding of matter, motion and stability, energy, waves.

\*Domain scores should not be compared to each other.

\*\*Student percentile rank should not be averaged as it is statistically inappropriate.

The overall assessment result scale score represents student performance on the science assessment for understanding in the areas of life science, physical science, and Earth and space science.

The three domains are broad topic areas of science. Combinations of life, physical, and Earth space science can be used to answer questions about observable and measurable phenomena. Engineering, technology, and the application of science are incorporated into the three science domains.

**Start a Conversation:** You can use these results to begin a conversation with your child, teacher, or school administrators about science. Below are some topics and questions you may use in discussion with teachers, principals, and others in your school.

The ISA is a dynamic and innovative assessment. It is aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards (ILS) in science, which are based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The standards and the assessment go beyond asking students to memorize facts. Both ask students to "answer" questions with facts and be able to explain why and support their answers with evidence and reasoning. The standards ask students to engage with science using integrated and interrelated concepts.

### What questions could I ask teachers or administrators at my child's school?

- What should I expect from an ILS-aligned classroom?
- How has science education changed with the application of the Illinois Learning Standards?
- How will the new science standards prepare my child for college and/or career?

### What changes have schools made to align current curriculum with the new science standards?

- How will science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) be incorporated within the science curriculum?
- Do the standards align from grade to grade as my student progresses through school?
- What is three-dimensional learning and how will it affect my child?
- What different skills and competencies will my child be required to learn within the scope of the new standards?
- What can we do at home to prepare, encourage, improve, and advance my child's performance regarding these standards?

### What should I ask my child?

- To explain a natural experience.
- Why they think their explanation is true.
- To provide evidence (facts, data, observations, etc.) for their response.
- To provide an explanation (reasoning) about why their evidence supports the original idea.
- The "why" surrounding scientific phenomena because the fun of science is analyzing evidence and formulating reasoning!

### Resources:

- Illinois State Board of Education, Science Resources: <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-Science-Assessment.aspx>
- Resources to help parents with NGSS: <https://www.nextgenscience.org/resources/ngss-parent-guides>
- Understanding the Standards NGSS <https://www.nextgenscience.org/understanding-standards/understanding-standards>

## 2.3 Description of Individual Student Report

### 2.3.1 General Information

#### A. Identification Information

An Individual Student Report lists the student's name, date of birth, state student ID, grade level when assessed, district name, school name, and state. The grade level when assessed is also shown in a box on the left side of the report.

#### B. Description of Report

The description of the report provides the grade level assessed, content area (science) assessed, and assessment year. It also provides a general overview of the assessment and score report.

#### C. Family Portal

The Individual Student Reports include information for parents to access student reports and report explanation videos via the IL Family Portal. The Family Portal can be accessed at <https://familyportal.pearson.com/il>.

#### D. How to Use the Report

This section provides guidance for how parents can use the report to start a discussion with their child's teacher(s). It is important for parents and educators to have regular check-ins to ensure students are learning the necessary skills to stay on track. This information can also help to identify the child's strengths and challenges so that parents and educators can work towards supporting the student's academic progress.

### 2.3.2 Overall Assessment Scores

#### E. Graphical Representation of Overall Performance: Overall Scale Score and Performance Level

This graphic provides an illustration of the four performance levels and where the student's overall scale score is positioned along the performance scale. The student's score is indicated by the number and black arrow positioned in the column labeled as Child's Score along the performance level where the individual student's score aligns. The ranges of overall scale scores are indicated underneath the graphic. Refer to Appendix A for the full list of scale score ranges for each performance level.

#### F. Your Child's Score

This section of the report provides information related to your child's overall scale score as well as an estimate of expected changes to that score if he/she were to take the test many times.

# **Appendix A**

## **Scale Score Ranges**

Grade 5 Science			
Level 1 Cut	700	Level 1 Range	700 - 769
Level 2 Cut	770	Level 2 Range	770 - 811
Level 3 Cut	812	Level 3 Range	812 - 855
Level 4 Cut	856	Level 4 Range	856 - 900

Grade 8 Science			
Level 1 Cut	700	Level 1 Range	700 - 769
Level 2 Cut	770	Level 2 Range	770 - 811
Level 3 Cut	812	Level 3 Range	812 - 855
Level 4 Cut	856	Level 4 Range	856 - 900